



*Pieces of Iowa's Past*, published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the legislative session, features historical facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government. All historical publications are reproduced here with the actual spelling, punctuation, and grammar retained.

**March 30, 2011**

**THIS WEEK: John B. Newhall**

**BACKGROUND:** This information is from the introduction written by William Petersen in a reprint of the second edition of *A Glimpse of Iowa* in 1846.

**John B. Newhall**

John B. Newhall arrived in Burlington in 1834. John Newhall established a general store with Isaac and Joseph Newhall. The first issue of the *Wisconsin Territorial Gazette and Burlington Advertiser* of July 27, 1837, included an advertisement for their establishment. John Newhall was a careful student of the new Territory and was especially interested in the difficulties facing those early pioneers. In 1841, John Newhall published a 252-page volume—*Sketches of Iowa, or the Emigrant's Guide*. The book was dedicated to Augustus Caesar Dodge, a delegate to Congress from the Territory of Iowa. John Newhall published a second volume of one hundred pages, *The British Emigrants' "Hand Book," And Guide to the New States of America, Particularly Illinois, Iowa, and Wisconsin*. This book was published in London in 1844. Newhall had been abroad on a lecture tour promoting his "*Sketches of Iowa*." Newhall returned to Iowa and immediately began writing his third book on the Iowa Territory—*A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846*.

A  
**GLIMPSE OF IOWA IN**  
**1846,**  
OR THE  
**EMIGRANT'S GUIDE**  
AND  
**TERRITORIAL DIRECTORY:**

CONTAINING A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFERENT  
COUNTIES, PRINCIPAL TOWNS, COURT CALENDAR, &c.

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE  
**NEW PURCHASE**

EMBRACING, ALSO,  
MUCH PRACTICAL ADVICE AND USEFUL INFORMA-  
TION TO INTENDING EMIGRANTS.

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BY J. B. NEWHALL,  
AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES OF IOWA," "EMIGRANT'S HAND BOOK," &c.

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"The possible destiny of the United States & America as a  
nation of a hundred millions of freemen, stretching from the At-  
lantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred, and speaking  
the language of Shakespeare and Milton, is an august concept.  
Why should we not wish to see it realized?"—COLUMBIC

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PUBLISHED BY THURSTON & FIZ  
GAZETTE OFFICE, BURLINGTON

.....  
**1846**

[Title page of first edition of *A Glimpse of Iowa in 1846*]

The editor of the Burlington *Hawk-Eye* was allowed one of the first copies and wrote: "The price is very low for a work of 80 pages, being just 25 cents. We doubt the writer has done himself justice in the publication."

Newhall had limited the publication to 600 copies, and the editor expressed hope that a second edition would soon be available.

John Newhall planned to leave Iowa in the winter of 1848. The Gold Rush was calling, and on February 15, 1849, he wrote a letter to the editor of the *Hawk-Eye* saying the lines from "Oh Susannah"; "I'm going to California, the gold dust for to see; I'm going to Sacramento, with a wash-bowl on my knee!" The Burlington *Hawk-Eye* noted on March 8, 1849, Newhall's newest publication—Major Newhall's *Emigrant's Guide to the Gold Region*.

Newhall left Burlington for St. Louis. He planned to travel by boat up the Missouri River to the best place for heading west to the gold mines. Newhall died of cholera in Independence, Missouri, on May 8, 1849. He was sick only about 12 hours.

***NOTE:*** By late 1881, a blacksmith shop was in operation in Newhall, Iowa, and a half dozen merchants eagerly waited to open their doors in the new settlement likely named for John B. Newhall, a Burlington, Iowa, man who lectured in this country and abroad about the virtues of the Iowa Territory and Midwest.